

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION EXTENSION ACT OF 2012

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 29, 2012

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Speaker, the bill on the Floor today is not the bill we should be debating. Rather than extending surface transportation law for the ninth time, we should vote on the Senate-passed, bipartisan MAP-21 bill, which has been introduced in the House as H.R. 14.

This debate is yet another example of the Republican Majority's absolute refusal to compromise—even with Senators in their own party. They have spent six weeks arguing internally about this legislation. They have refused to work across the aisle. And this week they have waited until Thursday, two days before the surface transportation law expires, to hold a vote on this issue.

This is not a time for games. We should be voting today on legislation to invest in critical infrastructure projects and support 1.8 million jobs nationwide. We should send legislation to the President to ensure a strong construction season for an industry facing 17.1 percent unemployment. Instead, the Republican Leadership insists on further delay.

THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MINNESOTA: A REFUGEE RE- SETTLEMENT AND JOB TRAIN- ING SUCCESS STORY

HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 30, 2012

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, over the past four decades, tens of thousands of refugees who have fled lands of conflict, persecution, or turmoil have traveled to Minnesota to find a new home and start a new life. Often, these families or individuals, young and old, arrive in Minnesota without possessions, without language skills, and without certainty about their futures. Minnesota has welcomed refugees from Laos, Vietnam, Russia, Sudan, Ethiopia, Liberia, Somalia, Burma, Bosnia, and dozens of other countries who are now our friends, neighbors, and co-workers. There are thousands of success stories, but starting a new life in Minnesota requires support, assistance, and a willing partner.

The St. Paul-based International Institute of Minnesota, IIM, is one of America's premier refugee resettlement agencies. Since 1975, IIM has sponsored and resettled more than 22,000 refugees. Their resettlement work, along with the extensive education and train-

ing programs they provide for new Minnesotans, has resulted in refugees transitioning from conflict and uncertainty to stability and economic self-sufficiency. IIM's work is both valuable and essential to the contributions refugees continue to make, as they become New Americans, to Minnesota's economy and the strengths they bring to our communities.

One of IIM's innovative and successful job training programs is the Medical Careers Pathway for New Americans, a sectoral-based training model within the healthcare industry. IIM developed the program that defines a pathway to employment and economic independence for newcomers in Minnesota. It has evolved over the years to meet both the needs of low-income New Americans and the demand from the industry for a well trained and qualified healthcare workforce. The program includes three areas of training—Nursing Assistant Training, NAR; College Readiness Classes, CR; and Medical Career Advancement, MCA.

This established career pathway helps participants move from entry to advanced positions in healthcare by helping them navigate complex higher education systems so that their long-term goal of career advancement and economic independence are attained. Critical language, academic support services and life skills tools are provided, including strategies for balancing work, family and the stress of living in poverty. The pathway recently added a FastTRAC Initiative with St. Paul College and Roseville Adult Basic Education to increase passing rates for students in the Anatomy and Physiology course.

The program has graduated and certified nearly 1,800 nursing assistants. Eighty-five percent of these certified graduates have been employed. Two-thirds of these IIM clients were unemployed when they entered the training program. Because of their dedication to their work and caring for the elderly, eighty-eight percent of graduates are still employed at one year, helping several longterm care business partners stabilize their workforce. The Director of Nursing from St. Anthony Park Home recently said, "I do not know what we would do without this training program."

The Pathway program has helped nearly 400 New Americans advance from entry-level positions in healthcare to nursing and other professional jobs within the industry. These program graduates are providing quality healthcare to hospital patients and long-term care residents, some of whom require bilingual caregivers, while easing the expected healthcare labor shortage in Minnesota.

The IIM is a model for refugee resettlement in the U.S., but the innovation and success of their Pathway program should also be considered a refugee job training model deserving of expansion, as well as replication across the country. I want to commend IIM for their valuable work and urge state and federal partners working on refugee resettlement and job training to continue to support IIM's success.

HONORING KAREN POPPEN

HON. JEFF DENHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 30, 2012

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge and honor Karen Poppen, retiring Superintendent of Keyes Union School District, and to thank her for her leadership and dedication to the academic advancement of the Central Valley.

Karen was born and raised in Merced, California, where she graduated from Merced High School and Merced College. She received a Bachelor of Arts in English at Whitworth College, now Whitworth University, in Spokane, Washington. After that, she began her career teaching English at Merced High School, where she taught from 1971 through 1974.

Karen retired from teaching in 1974 to raise her two sons. During this time, she volunteered at Catherine Everett and Ensen Elementary Schools in the Modesto City School District and in the Yucaipa-Calimesa Joint Unified School District.

In 1988, she returned to teaching and taught at Yucaipa Middle School and Park View Middle School until December of 1993. During this time, she received her master's degree and administrative credential. In January 1994, she became principal of Yucaipa Adult School and principal of Calimesa Elementary School in July of 1995.

In 2001, she was moved to the District Office as Director of Data Analysis, Grants, and Public Relations.

A year later, Karen moved to Beaumont Unified School District as Assistant Superintendent of Instructional Support Services, where she worked for almost five years. In addition, she was an adjunct professor for CSU San Bernardino for five years. On July 1, 2007, Karen became Superintendent of Keyes Union School District and currently serves as a member of the Keyes Municipal Advisory Council.

Karen married Daryl Poppen on July 1, 1972, and this summer they will celebrate their 40th anniversary.

After retirement, Karen and her husband plan to do some short-term mission work overseas with Operation Mobilization, a worldwide ministry and relief organization working in 110 countries.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring and commending Karen Poppen, Superintendent for Keyes Union School District, for her numerous years of selfless service to the education of our community.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.